



Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
www.isbe.net

James T. Meeks
Chairman

Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

Support and Accountability Webinar FAQ

School Improvement:

- “Is this only for Title I? Does a school have to be a Title I school to receive a Lowest Performing School rating? Or is it only that the "cutoff" determined based on the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools and any school can fall in that tier?”

Every public school will receive a summative rating. All schools will be included in the determination of the lowest-performing 5 percent threshold. Any school may receive the Lowest Performing School designation. However, only eligible Title I districts may receive federal Title I 1003(a) funds to support school improvement activities.

- “Where can we find the list of approved IL EMPOWER providers?”

Approved IL-EMPOWER Partners can be found by clicking the support areas on the ISBE IL-EMPOWER website at <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/IL-EMPOWERProfLearnPartner.aspx>. Approved Learning Partners for 2018-19 will be posted soon.

- “Is funding available for the planning activities?”

A Title I-eligible school that opts to take its first year as a planning year can use Title I 1003(a) school improvement funds and/or set aside up to 10 percent (if receiving comprehensive supports) or up to 20 percent (if receiving targeted supports) of its Title I Basic allocation to support planning activities.

- “If a non-Title I school is identified, will ISBE allocate funds to that school? If not, what is the rationale for such identification?”

Only schools eligible to receive Title I funds can receive Title I 1003 (a) school improvement funds and be identified for comprehensive or targeted supports and interventions. If a school receives an Underperforming or Lowest Performing School designation but is not eligible for Title I, other funds will be used to support its improvement efforts.

- “Is the improvement plan template available? Will there be a standardized School Improvement Plan format in the near future?”

ISBE is currently investigating a standardized format for the development of school improvement activities.

- “Please reiterate which tiers are eligible for comprehensive or targeted supports and improvements?”

A school that receives comprehensive supports is among the lowest-performing 5 percent of Title I schools in Illinois and among high schools that have a graduation rate of 67 percent or less.

A school that receives targeted supports has one or more student demographic groups performing at or below the level of the “all students” group in the lowest-performing 5 percent of all schools.

Additionally, schools can be identified for targeted supports and interventions in two other ways:

- **One or more student groups fails to meet the 95 percent threshold for participation in state assessments for three consecutive years (using 2018, 2019, and 2020 participation rates for the 2018-19 identifications), or**
 - **One or more student groups is in the lowest-performing 10 percent for that student group statewide for three consecutive years (using 2018, 2019, and 2020 performance data for the 2018-19 identifications).**
- “What happens if a school does not exit within the four-year time frame?”

A school that still needs comprehensive supports after four years will continue to receive those supports. The school will conduct a new needs assessment, as its improvement needs will have changed in that time, and ISBE will work more closely with the school and its Learning Partner(s) to support the school’s success.

Summative Ratings and Indicator Calculations:

- “In what format is the summative rating? Letter grade or numeric score?”

The summative rating will come in the form of a descriptive school performance designation: Exemplary School, Commendable School, Underperforming School, or Lowest Performing School.

- “What data elements in the Student Information System (SIS) will you use to determine who was at the same school for ‘more than half the school year?’”

ISBE will use enrollment data to determine whether or not a student has been enrolled at the school for more than half the school year.

- “The way we understand it is that our preliminary designation will be based on 2016-17 data and our final will be based on 2017-18 data. Is this correct? What is the purpose then of the preliminary designation since it could be different based on data?”

ISBE is committed to providing districts with schools’ initial designations in June so that they can begin improvement activities at the start of the fiscal year as soon as funds become available. We believe all improvement efforts are valuable; therefore, schools that are



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identified for comprehensive or targeted supports in the initial preliminary round will continue to receive funding and services through fiscal year 2019, even if their summative designations change in October. Schools that are identified for supports in October using the 2017-18 data will be added to the eligibility list and will receive their funding as soon as the Title I application is complete and released to the district.

- “How often are the summative designations given? Do they change every year or every three years? Can you provide more information about the three-year cycle?”

Schools will receive summative designations annually. ISBE will recalculate eligibility for comprehensive supports and interventions every three years. ISBE is currently working through the best way to align these different timelines and ensure effective communication to schools and districts.

- “Do districts receive any ratings or are all ratings only at the school level? We need more clarification about the building accountability versus the district accountability. Will summative rating be issued for district AND schools?”

Only schools will receive summative ratings. Districts will not receive summative ratings.

- “How will EL growth be calculated -- 2017 and 2018 data only, due to the changes in the ACCESS? Will we know expected progress for ELs soon?”

ISBE is currently determining the business rules for English Learners’ progress to proficiency. We are incorporating recommendations from our Technical Advisory Committee, as well as from stakeholders. ISBE will share the final information as soon as it is available.

- “Will the business rules used for calculating summative scores/ratings be shared? For example, how are you establishing students who attended more than half of the year?”

Yes. ISBE is committed to transparency in the process of accountability.

- “Why did ISBE make the shift from exempting English Learners who have been in the United States for less than a year from the ELA portion of the exam to requiring them to be assessed?”

ISBE elected, after significant consultation with stakeholders, to exercise the flexibility under ESSA to assess all students in all areas, including English Learners who have been in the United States for less than a year, and to exclude their scores in all content areas from accountability determinations. This will provide baseline data for these students so that in their second year, when their scores are factored into accountability determinations, we have not only their academic proficiency but also their growth data to guide instruction.



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- “Are subgroups holding at 20 or more, correct?”

Yes, a student group must number 20 or more to be included as a group for the purposes of accountability determinations.

- “Does receiving full credit for the other indicators mean that each school will get 100 points for that indicator with the weighting for each indicator staying where they are currently set?”

Yes. Schools will receive the full allotment of points at the weighting identified in the Illinois ESSA Plan.

- “What information is needed for the Assessment summary and college and career information on the e-Report Card? Is this something districts need to submit or will it be taken from SIS?”

Districts should take every opportunity to review and correct both their assessment data and their e-Report Card data. Primarily, what is being corrected is student demographic data, along with enrollment data, disability data, and/or course and graduation data. These corrections are handled through various systems, including SIS and the Entity Profile System. In general, all of these systems are accessed through IWAS. Information for the college and career ready indicator will be collected in SIS for both currently collected indicators (e.g., state assessment scores, attendance) and those that are new in 2018-19 (e.g., summer employment).

Communications:

- “What is the best way to be alerted to the most recent ESSA documents as they become available? Outside of the Superintendent’s Weekly Message and checking the ESSA page daily, is there any other method that pushes them out?”

ISBE sends direct emails to district superintendents and to school principals. You can ensure you are on the listserv to receive these direct emails by reviewing -- and updating, if needed -- your contact information in the Entity Profile System. ISBE also sends these notifications via the Public Information Broadcasting System (PIBS), an application in IWAS. You can also set your preferences in IWAS to forward all PIBS messages to your email address. Updated information will also continue to be posted on the [ISBE ESSA website](#).

- “Are the memos that are being sent to superintendents going to be posted on the website anywhere?”

Yes. ISBE places ESSA communications on the ESSA page on the ISBE website at <https://www.isbe.net/essa>. ISBE is initiating a refresh of this page to make these notifications



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and other timely information easier to find.

- “How does a school district find its specific information? The Report Card? How are designations communicated?”

Schools can access the data used in calculating the summative ratings through SIS. ISBE is developing customized reports specific to the summative ratings calculations. This information will be available in the fall once designations are finalized. ISBE will communicate the preliminary ratings in June via a letter sent through direct email. Ensure your contact information is up -to date by reviewing and updating it, if needed, in the Entity Profile System. The final ratings in October will be published on the Illinois Report Card.

- “Will the ratings in June be embargoed and not public until October?”

We are working to see if it will be possible to embargo summative ratings for a period of time for both the preliminary ratings in June and the final ratings in October.

Grades for Growth:

- “Can you review again what will occur in 2020 and 2021 regarding the subgroup grades?”

Letter grades are only given for one indicator, student growth. A school will receive two grades for growth, one comparing the school to all schools and one comparing the school to “similar” schools. ISBE has not yet defined “similar” schools. Schools will not receive grades for growth until the 2020 Illinois Report Card. ISBE welcomes and values feedback in the meantime.

- “How is the assignment of two letter grades not a punitive action? Rephrase as ‘What is the rationale behind assigning two letter grades for growth?’”

Letter grades are easily comprehensible by parents, families, and the public. The grade for growth is intended to facilitate community conversations about student growth while respecting the complexity of the indicator.